

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

OCTOBER 14, 1935



"IMPARTIAL" ARBITRATION BY JUDGE SLOSS

BY ELVAR WAYNE

Oct 21 '35

THE ESSENTIAL LIE OF CHRISTIANITY

BY ROBERT BRIFFAULT

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

VOLUME III

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NOTES AND COMMENT

COULDN'T USE IT

SINCE Attorney General U. S. Webb had stated publicly that there was no money available for investigating vigilanteism in Santa Rosa, the Society of Friends (Quakers) of Berkeley sent him a check for five dollars to help out in "raising a fund" for the purpose. Mr. Webb sent the check back.

ITEMS

WHEN Ambassador Bingham left for England he lent his yacht, *Eala*, to the Department of Commerce for \$1 a year. Commerce now has put it in drydock for extensive repairs. It will be a new ship when Bingham gets it back.

—WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND



Senator Archer leaving on the Hawaiian Junket to-day lent his house to the Department of Agriculture for \$1 a year. Agriculture will immediately begin wrecking operations and will construct a new house for the Senator.

Brain Truster Arden is using the street car these days. He lent his automobile to the Department of Justice for \$1 a year. Justice has put the car in a garage and is overhauling it for Mr. Arden.

Representative Folsom has lent his airplane to the Department of Interior for \$1 a year. Interior has declared the plane obsolete and has replaced it with a new Boeing.

A TOMMYROTTER

MR. PAUL MALLON, who writes one of those syndicated columns called "Backstage Washington", has been traveling through the State of California and telling us all about it. Clippings of his recent column, in which he noted

for our edification, that "the sub rosa capital of Communism is Carmel", have been sent to us by about thirty per cent of our subscribers, meaning that a lot of California newspapers which subscribe to Mr. Mallon's effusions have been assaulted by the scissors.

If the thirty per cent of our subscribers expect us to rise up and fall on Mr. Mallon with our best artillery of censure they are doomed to be disappointed. Our only gesture toward Mr. Mallon is our second-best pitying smile, and the suggestion that while he is on a "coast-to-coast vacation jaunt" hereafter he let his typewriter alone and thereby keep from making a fool of himself—or, rather, a bigger fool of himself than he makes "backstage" in Washington, with his "confidential" material which is just about as confidential as secrets from Mae West's press agent.

Incidentally, we might add that if Mr. Mallon can find more than ten and one-half Communists, near-Communists, pseudo-Communists, or semi-Communists in Carmel, PACIFIC WEEKLY will send him a dollar for each and every hair on their total and aggregate heads.

A BIT UNNECESSARY

IT is a very great pity that Rabbi Irving F. Reichert, who has a position of influence as rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco, does not choose to use his power in the interest of truth and humanity—except at rare intervals. In his sermon on Sept. 28 he said:

Nationalism has become the curse of our generation. Look at Germany, with its false emphasis on racial purity. Consider Italy, endangering world peace with its insane chauvinism. Or take Russia with its regimentation of 160,000,000 people under the banner of Communism. Leaving aside the other countries of the earth, there you have three superlative illustrations of the way in which nationalism distorts enlightened patriotism and shows itself to be one of the most malignant forces in the world.

Rabbi Reichert has not been to Russia. He has, however, been told many times, and he has read books, which tell him of what the Soviet Union has done for Jews; he knows that all the stigma of being a Jew, which was so strong in Imperial Russia, has been removed in Soviet Russia, that the Ghetto has been wiped out, and that Jews take part in national life in every sphere on an absolute equality with all other races and nationalities. He knows further that in predominantly Jewish areas the Jews have their own schools, newspapers, theatres, operas, palaces of culture; are encouraged to develop their own culture in their own language; in other words to develop the essential contribution of the Jews within the framework of the Soviet system. He also knows that the banner watchword of communism is internationalism; that the very Hearst papers he has attacked attack the communists for this and posit against it the nationalism of the Legion and the vigilantes which Dr. Reichert has on occasion valiantly attacked.

Why then does he use (and abuse) the Soviet Union and

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class it, as do the most ignorant and vicious tories, with Germany and Italy? That kind of subservience to the fascists, the shippers, employers and industrialists—even though some of them be members of his congregation—Dr. Reichert should have the courage and the integrity to avoid.

We'll give him a hint: he doesn't have to praise Russia; he can just leave her out of the discussion when he is sermonizing on the vicious nationalism, the corrupt and bestial treatment of Jews and workers, liberals, humanitarians and pacifists in Germany and Italy and all other fascist countries.

TRADUCING MR. HEMINGWAY

EVIDENTLY unable to bear the competition of the *Daily Worker* and the *New Masses* who telegraphed for, and got an original article from Ernest Hemingway on the "murder of the veterans in Florida", William Randolph Hearst came limping after last week with a copy of a piece by Hemingway in the September *Esquire*, an anti-war piece. Hearst published it on his editorial page making it seem as if Hemingway were of a piece with Mencken, de Casseres, Isaac Don Levine and others who have sold out their integrity to Hearst.

But Hemingway hasn't sold out his integrity; long ago he refused to write for Hearst when he was being besieged to do so, and continued with *Scribner's Magazine* for much less pay, just in order to preserve his integrity. His piece in *Esquire*, beautifully written again at a white heat of emotion—the war made an indelible impression on Ernest Hemingway and he will never get that horror out of his system—attacks the very things Hearst wants and stands for. It attacks Hearst's friend and model, Hitler. Hearst is evidently willing to stand for that as long as he can lie about Hemingway's position. But he can't. Hemingway, the artist, couldn't go Hearst; no artist, no sensitive person can. The fascists can have everything—money, power, guns, the government, the Legion, their Americanism and their "patriotism"—but they can't have integrity, they can win no one who is intelligent, honest, sensitive, truthful or gentlemanly. They must content themselves with the gangsters, the cads and the cowards, thick-skinned sadists, the cruel, the violent, the brutal and the dishonest. Many people are beginning to realize this. Hearst makes it clearer every day.

IMPARTIALITY FOLLOWS THE POWER

WE PRINT on another page an article by Elvar Wayne on the partiality of "impartial" arbitration as illustrated by Judge M. C. Sloss's recent ruling on "hot cargo". This article was written before the second ruling which appeared to give the longshoremen some rights, and some liberals may feel Mr. Wayne's article unjustified. But while the second ruling prohibiting the employers from blacklisting stevedores who refuse to unload seab cargo for one company, seems to offset the anti-union effect of the first, it alters nothing in the principle of that anti-labor ruling. It puts it up to sister unions to remove the "hot cargo" ban in order that San Francisco longshoremen may continue to earn their living.

What must be clearly understood is that this conflict on the Western waterfront—which is a model all America and many other countries are watching—is not merely a dispute on this violation or that specific condition. Fundamentally, the work-

ers are fighting for their right to unionize to maintain and better their conditions; fundamentally, the employers are trying to break the unions. Every now and then this purpose comes clearly to the surface. In this hot cargo dispute the employers were doing their best to register additional longshoremen: that meant, they wanted non-union men in the union. A thousand scabs in the I. L. A. could and would wreak havoc in the I. L. A. This had at all cost to be prevented, and the I. L. A. has for the time being prevented it: and sister unions, understanding, have helped the I. L. A. fight. When Vancouver sent their telegram:

In view of the critical situation facing you, the central strike committee of Longshoremen Water Transport Workers of Canada agree to the release of British Columbia cargo.

which Bridges read at the second Dreamland Auditorium meeting, the Canadians showed they understood what was happening here, and that they would make a temporary particular sacrifice to support unionism. They took the long view. This showed a solidarity and unity that Labor has been struggling always to achieve: this was the real workers' victory.

The second Sloss decision, giving the longshoremen as individuals the right to refuse to work for one company, while seemingly righting the misbalance of the first, would nevertheless probably never have been made unless Bridges had stated baldly as he did:

"If one scab starts working on the San Francisco waterfront 4,000 longshoremen will walk out—just like that."

Everyone knew those words meant what they said. Thus when arbitration makes concessions to workers it is because they have shown strength; when they are weak arbitration goes to the employers one hundred per cent. In the Salinas lettuce strike in 1934 the Filipino pickers, left alone and weak, got not one cent raise from the Arbitration Board, but their bunkhouses burned; the white workers, who had a strong strike supported by all the Filipino pickers, were raised. The cost of living had gone up for brown men as for whites in Salinas. Thus the workers learn: nothing except their own strength and struggle, their own organizing and their own solidarity, will give them what they—and the whole country and the whole world—must have. When workers are strong in a strike, employers have to make concessions; when workers' organizations are strong in a conflict, the Arbitrators have to make concessions.

A. F. OF L. LEADERSHIP AND THE SLOSS RULING

DODGED militancy of the I. L. A. rank and file leadership, which on many occasions has impressed shipowners, is apparently making an impression even on the old A. F. of L. bureaucratic leadership. To the consternation of employers and the San Francisco *Examiner* William J. Lewis, district president of the I. L. A. and representative of Joseph P. Ryan on this coast, had an editorial in his newspaper, the *Pacific Coast Longshoreman*, scoring the "hot cargo" ruling of Judge Sloss.

"There are some things more important than arbitration or awards," says the editorial, explaining that the ruling might result in workers having to act as strike-breakers against a

sister union, and stating that "whether employers are agreeable or not, labor's first duty is to labor, and when that duty is challenged that challenge should not be ignored". The editorial runs a ringing paragraph:

To expect that we will jettison these principles and dump these traditions would be too high a price to pay for agreements. The employers cannot expect it. Our membership would not intend it. And our organization cannot countenance it.

Good for you, Mr. Lewis! Is that dream too impossible for fulfillment that even now all labor would unite, all and face the common danger and the common enemy in one front?

For that, of course, Mr. Vandeleur and the fake "Union Labor Party" would have to stop endorsing men who sent troops to break strikes as Mayor Rossi did last year. Vandeleur allies himself with employers, Chamber of Commerce representatives and other anti-union and anti-labor elements to do this. Which means only that Vandeleur is not a labor representative any more than is Mr. Herbert Fleishhacker, and the sooner labor realizes it the better for us all.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

ROBINSON JEFFERS is moving. The Reds had him stationary, all dead and "escaped". Not so. The Reds are too impatient to get things settled, they like pigeon holes, so they have put the great poet in one, fixed and finished. But in his last book of poetry Jeffers shows that his eyes, in a fine frenzy rolling, are seeing things, seeing lines in the epic that history is making over and above us all and our works, our wars, our strikes, our depressions and recoveries. The world do move and we all move with it. Poets, too.

NOT HARRY BRIDGES, the workers themselves, govern the work on the waterfront in San Francisco. That is just what Bridges is after. The old, professional labor skates would like to have labor troubles left to them, the officers, so that they can settle strikes and keep the peace or break it. A profitable business. They think that Bridges seeks the same power, but he doesn't seem to. Rank-and-file self control is his slogan and with it, and with behavior in accordance with it, he has established democracy in his unions. He could be ousted by now by the A. F. of L. and the unions would go right on. Judge Sloss has recognized that condition, that principle; and, better still, it is a description of a fact.

The 1,600 longshoremen suspended by the shipowners may go back to work; the union may hire them out to unload even the freight on the Point Clear, but if the cargo is too "hot" to touch there is no man that can compel them to handle it. Not Judge Sloss; not Harry Bridges; not the committee or group back of Bridges. The longshoremen have been politicalized to the point where the workers themselves understand the issue and require a word; not an order but a bit of information to decide. No doubt Judge Sloss knows that. He knew that you can lead a horse to water, but it's a feat to make him drink.

Would that the average voter were like that horse. If he were, his governors, mayors, presidents and the chiefs of police would function like Judge Sloss. Education IS the secret as

educators and Hearst say, only the education is not that which you get in college.

THE WATERFRONT is a good school. I, personally, often send college boys there, especially when the shipowners, the old labor leaders and the police are delivering lectures, conducting experiments and holding classes. You might not think such teachers would mold strikers and revolutionists, and they may not intend to, but they do; I know how they can take dumb students and turn them an astonished red. Just as the vigilantes do in the fruit and vegetable valleys. Reactionaries, with their clubs and their press, are the educators of today. Somebody has to furnish the key; that's all. Somebody has only to stand by and say; Look. We are getting enough reds to do that now, but they don't have to be reds. The Labor Party can say "Look" all over the shop. That party may be proposing only reforms, but when their superficial reforms are beaten, they can learn a lesson from us old reformers and —go not back, but farther forward. We old reformers used to be reasonable, we listened to the big business men. We didn't have any key. The Labor Party candidates should ask the longshoremen for Their Key or go to their school. Harry Bridges can matriculate them.

THE WEST COAST has one boast that the East Coast and the Gulf cannot claim: the highbrows and Labor have almost a united front. We think that it is more important to get together than to be just right. It is wiser to have, than to be a front.

SHOULD A garden look as if the gardener worked on his knees? I ask you.

TEDDY KUSTER brought to Carmel last week a German movie, a musical comedy, in which the comic element was based on the class line. A count, the master, had got into the servant's place and the servant was a gentleman. It was funny enough, but it could hardly have been done in English; the English have trained their lower classes to keep their stations, like the snobs they are. The Germans are doing that now, with fascism. It is well worth while to have a theatre that shows us such sharp contrasts, and Kuster seems bent upon

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giving us all sorts of foreign pieces. His list of Russian movies for the Filmarte Theatre is excellent, but his American and English plays are good.

THE WAR is on; the war of conquest in Africa. Mussolini is marching in Ethiopia and that means that our civilization endures and grows. In our ideology this cannot be; the League of Nations was established to stop it, but the ex-Red leads and personifies us and the grand old thing—he knows our ideas and ethics are poppycock and actuate imperialism. There is no security yet. England cannot be sure that she has what she has—to keep.

THE SECRETARY OF LABOR is wrong enough; why that Assistant Secretary? The President could easily save his fare.

THE JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE should be a little ahead of the Senior just to show growth, a hopeful advance, but it doesn't. It goes right on using the ideas of the old men who have made business a joke, a public scorn. And it doesn't pay, does it?



INTO THE TRENCHES BY CHRISTMAS

BY WILLIAM MILLIS

London, Oct. 4—The chances are three to one that there will be war in Europe before the end of the year, according to the men who figure risks for Lloyd's.

THAT important item appeared in the press a few days after Mussolini opened his long delayed "defense expedition" against Ethiopia—an imperialist attack which so many people naively think will be localized in East Africa. In 1914 the same type of person thought that the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand meant only the beginning of another Balkan War, but after Sarajevo . . .

In the coming autumn weeks the world will probably go through a period of false efforts towards peace and of mounting antagonisms exactly similar to the days of July, 1914. Even as Il Duce sends forth his first troops and planes against Abyssinia, we get impressions of the shallowness of the peace efforts of the powers of Western Europe. Instead of Italy "backing down before the moral strength of world opinion", as the League of Nations antiquarians so frequently have informed us, it now appears that France and Great Britain are doing an "about-face" in the matter of "sanctions", weapons of economic boycott and military action, which, oddly enough, are "methods to keep the peace". The "war to end war" idea appears again! This last-minute side-stepping by these two powers is explained by their financial interests in Fascist Italy, which must either engage in conflict with a feudal emperor in an out of the way part of Africa or succumb to the forces of working class Socialism at home. After all, imperialistic

exploitation of Ethiopia and the hypothetical threat to the road to India matter little to the capitalist governments that would otherwise have to face the rise of Socialist Italy.

In such a manner England might back down and prove, for once, that Lloyd's were wrong in estimating world war within three months. Perhaps, but probably not. Even if the Italo-Ethiopian conflict goes no further, it means not peace nor even the illusion of peace. We would be in a period of still more intensive war-preparations—preparations which would find an outlet soon after a new "international incident".

Whatever the events of war and peace in the coming months, a martial spirit that will not soon be dispelled is spreading throughout the western world. Wishful pacifists would point to the anti-war feeling existing among large numbers of people in France, England and in this country. Yet such persons, although not yet subjected to alluring pro-war propaganda usually believe in the weapon of "sanctions", which translates into the common expression of "we'll have peace if we have to fight for it". Concurring and yet contrasting with this faith in the League is another almost universal opinion—a moral opinion of right and wrong, we are told. This opinion, quite prevalent among all classes of society, in substance is a bitter personal attack on Mussolini for frankly continuing the imperialist policies of seizure and exploitation practised in the past by European capitalism. "The world does progress, and right is right and wrong is wrong . . ." This widespread hostility against Il Duce is exactly similar to the hysterical feelings against Kaiser Wilhelm in 1914 over "the rape of Belgium". It will be relatively easy for expert war propagandists to turn these opinions for "sanctions" and "ag'in Mussolini" to their own ends.

Because of the very nature of present society, the sincere and effective opposition against capitalist war can come only from the international working class and its allies. The only effective way to end war—between classes and between nations—is to end the system that breeds war. In more specific terms, the establishment of socialism is the only way to stop war. Meanwhile, the working class, organized into militant trade unions, must safeguard their own existence by taking such political and industrial action as to outwit the war maneuverings of capitalists and their governments.

Now the main hindrance to successful working class opposition to war lies in the internecine warfare between socialist political organizations, in the fight between Socialists and communists. The united front alone will not do it; *there must be unity of action among Marxist political groups*. In Italy and France efforts towards amalgamation are now nearing successful conclusion. In this country, immediate, concerted action is needed to turn the working class to socialism. Otherwise, there will be little detour from "The Road to War".



SLOSS'S 'IMPARTIAL' ARBITRATION

BY ELVAR WAYNE

JUDGE M. C. SLOSS's recent decision on the "hot cargo" dispute between the San Francisco I. L. A. and the shipowners is a perfect illustration of the impossibility of impartial judgment in labor disputes.

Apostles of class-collaboration, labor skates and that ambiguous animal known as the "average citizen" believe that participants in a labor dispute only have to gather around a conference table, put forth their claims like gentlemen and let a "disinterested" third party decide the case with perfect justice for all. Everyone departs amicably, realizing that justice has been served and that the "public" has been spared an unpleasant struggle.

Perhaps readers of PACIFIC WEEKLY have heard of an arbitration judge in this country being chosen from the ranks of labor. I haven't. Without exception, so far as I know, arbiters in labor disputes are chosen, usually by an "impartial" government, from among prominent citizens who have spent most of their lives in close association with and often in the service of the employing class. Such a person is Judge Sloss, a man whose thinking and capacity for judgment have long been conditioned by a ruling class environment and ideology. Assuming that he has a few genuine sympathies for the working man, we know that his thinking faculties are irrevocably colored by his past association with the employing class of society, and this fact alone makes him incapable of rendering an impartial judgment.

In his decision requiring the longshoremen of San Francisco to handle "hot cargo", Judge Sloss clearly demonstrated his class allegiance to the waterfront employers. His ruling was a complete victory for the shipowners; it contained not the slightest concession to the claims of the longshoremen; it avoided as much as possible any reference to the I. L. A. demands; and in substance it illegalized any united action of the workers for winning those demands. An appeal for a re-hearing on the decision was denied, although previously the employers were granted a re-hearing on the question of back-pay which the arbitration ruling had awarded to the longshoremen after the 1934 strike.

One cannot discuss the Judge's decision, however, without reference to its historical setting. Briefly stated, the longshoremen refused to handle cargo loaded by scabs under strike conditions in other localities. This refusal amounts to a sympathetic strike on the part of the San Francisco longshoremen in support of striking workers in British Columbia, on the River Lines and in certain warehouses. Since the partial victory of Pacific Coast longshoremen and other maritime unions as a result of the 1934 strike and because of the resultant rise of militant rank and file unionism along with the formation of the Pacific Coast Marine Federation, the employers, often aided by reactionary labor officials such as Scharrenberg, have raised the "Red" scare and have used every device to smash the gains made by the rank and file. In the face of the rising militancy of the maritime unions and the consolidation of their gains, the employers resorted to the shoddy trick of distributing "hot cargo" on several piers in San Francisco and then blacklisted every longshore gang which refused to pass through picket lines to handle the cargo.

To pass through those picket lines and handle "hot cargo" meant for the longshoremen the destruction of labor solidarity

with other unions and affiliates of their own union. Without unity of action labor unions are rendered impotent in any struggle, the aspects of which are not confined to one locality. The ramifications of this struggle are not limited to San Francisco but take in the entire Pacific Coast, yet Sloss's decision completely disregarded the thousands of longshoremen in other Pacific Coast ports. At the same time his ruling was a victory for employers in every port. In outlawing sympathetic strikes, Sloss's decision in effect rules out every strike, for what chance has a union to win a strike against powerful employers' associations without support from other unions? In requiring longshoremen to pass through picket lines, Judge Sloss is asking that the workers violate the most fundamental principles of labor solidarity. As Harry Bridges aptly put it:

"Would a union man pass a picket to eat in an unfair restaurant? That is what the employers expect the I. L. A. men to do on the picket docks."

The issue before Judge Sloss was clear-cut; it admitted little compromise. One side had to lose heavily. He was in a tight spot. So he acted as most arbitrators do in similar situations, as anyone who has studied the record of past arbitration decisions could tell you, in favor of the employers. If he decided against the workers he would arouse their wrath and earn their distrust, but if he decided for them he would arouse even more than ire and distrust on the part of employers. Ways would be found to oust him, and undoubtedly he would be forever ostracized from respectable bourgeois society. Besides, if he favored the longshoremen he knew that rank and file labor would become a more serious threat to "responsible" labor leadership than heretofore. The political and economic domination of the employers might be effectively hamstrung if militant labor became stronger than it is at present. Unquestionably profits, the basis of our social order, would be seriously threatened, perhaps curtailed! It's all right to grant a few concessions to workers as we did under the extraordinary, dangerous situation of last year's strike, but we must not let the workers become too strong.

Students of labor history know that arbitration boards, like God, are ultimately found on the side of the heaviest artillery, when the nature of the conflict is such that spiking the big guns of the employers might make them permanently *hors de combat*. The 1934 arbitration award granted certain concessions to the strikers without greatly undermining the ultimate power of the employers, but had Judge Sloss's recent decision been one-sidedly in favor of the longshoremen the former would have received an irreparable blow as long as the pretense of collective bargaining is maintained. In 1934 the maritime unions won a great victory, not because of, but in spite of the arbitration set-up.

It is not the purpose here to deny that workers have ever gained temporary advantages by submitting disputes to mediation boards. In petty disputes which are more or less isolated arbitration is often effective in shaping compromises without greatly endangering the position of either side to the conflict. But in labor struggles of far-reaching economic and political significance, arbitration courts have usually functioned as a check-mate to labor's rising power. Ultimately labor loses before a mediation board, because ultimately the conflict between labor and capital reaches the stage of potential revo-

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lution and the pretense of impartial arbitration is abandoned in favor of enforced arbitration, outlawing the right to strike. The elaborate arbitration mechanism in Germany was abandoned when the ruling class found it necessary to institute Fascist terror in order to survive. In other countries (for example, England and Australia) where arbitration courts are highly developed, labor, although widely unionized, has been hamstrung; it has reached a static condition where real gains are impossible without overthrowing Capitalism.

The movement toward compulsory arbitration of labor disputes in this country is unmistakable. The Wagner and

Guffey bills are the first steps. When these methods fail, as they will, to stem working-class militancy, more drastic measures will be used. Strikes will be outlawed, the labor movement will be castrated and Fascism will be in the saddle. Judge Sloss's decision is a step in that direction. Only the most widespread support of the rank and file unions, such as the San Francisco I. L. A., will put a stop to the fascist attacks on labor which are now taking place throughout California with the help of "impartial" decisions as rendered by M. C. Sloss.



THE SOVIET THEATRE

BY FLORENCE BEAN JAMES

This is the second of two articles by Mrs. James on the Soviet Theatre. The first appeared in the issue of October 7.

OFCOURSE, there are in Soviet Russia propaganda plays, so called. About half of the plays we saw might be classed as propaganda plays. But it occurred to me that they were no more propaganda to the Russians who see them now than Shakespeare's plays were to his generation of playgoers. All of the plays portrayed that stressful period in Russian revolutionary history when the Bolshevik power was rising and they were consolidating their revolution. Intervention at the Vakhtangov Theatre represented the struggles of the Russians with the Allied forces attempting to defeat them at Odessa. The Last of the Turbins revealed the activities of the Germans promoting counter-revolution for the same purpose, subverting the revolution for their ends. The Optimistic Tragedy at the Kamerny Theatre dealt with the struggle of a woman commissar of the Navy to organize and discipline the marines for the causes of the revolution, composing the difficulties in which she finds herself with the men who on the one hand won't take her seriously as a commissar and on the other want to take her too seriously as a woman.

The propaganda plays had so much that was excellent theatre, were so beautifully acted, achieved such distinction in production that we, who had little enough background to be moved by the propaganda, sat enthralled, laughed with their laughter and wept with their tears. It is not at all surprising that Russian playwrights of Maxim Gorki's magnitude do not feel "regimented" by writing what the world may call propaganda plays. He is after all writing contemporary plays for audiences who want to see themselves and their ideas dramatized. Gorki or any other writer in the Soviet Union is only writing what his audiences demand. The Russian playwright can never find himself in the predicament of, say, Noel Coward, whom I once heard an Oxford professor describe as "a talented young man who writes plays about nothing for nobody and so wrote 'Design for Living'." Any play worth anything must be written to show "time her own image".

In the production of plays of contemporary ideas, Russia

does not neglect the classics, either of her own or other countries. More Shakespeare is performed in the Soviet Union in a year than in America and England put together. One of our most delightful evenings was spent at the Second Moscow Art Theatre watching a performance of *Twelfth Night*. The scenic artist, V. Favorski, mounted with a real *joie de vivre* Shakespeare's fantastic land of Illyria, and the actors, entering into the bright colors of the mood established by the artist, projected with the necessary robustiousness the comedy and with delicate charm the naive romance. In an address of welcome made to us by one of the directors of the Second Moscow Art, he said: "We live and work in an atmosphere of creative enthusiasm which pervades this land of ours. We have a feeling of healthy confidence which goes well with the life and color of Shakespeare and the vigor of his sonorous voice."

This year the visitors to the Festival are to see the famous Mikhoels of the State Jewish Art Theatre in the role of "King Lear".

Theatres are built in the Soviet Union not only to fill needs but to create them. In the remote reaches of the Republic, in Soviet Asia, the Urals, Siberia, in many provinces that in all history never saw a play or knew what a theatre was, the drama is being brought to the people. Under the intense Russification of the Czars, language, customs and cultural backgrounds in the farflung provinces were suppressed. These new theatres are to help re-create and protect these cultures. Directors, playwrights and actors from these various regions are being trained by the State in theatre technique.

On the collective farms, in the factories, everywhere theatres are being formed that might be classified as amateur. Many of these amateur groups do such excellent work that they are taken on tour. And much that is vital and new, both in writing and production, will come from these groups.

There is no particular distinction in the Soviet Union for a theatre or an actor to be located either in Moscow or in Leningrad. Their broad conception of the scope of the theatre envisages the contributions to be made to the culture of the country by various groups with vastly different backgrounds.

A Russian told me that the finest Hamlet he ever saw never played in Moscow in his life. He did not need the sanction of the metropolis in order for his artistry to be appreciated; his audiences came to him. I cannot help drawing the sad parallel between the situation there and here in the United States where an actor feels himself more important professionally as an "off stage noise" in a New York theatre than playing Hamlet on the Pacific Coast. An amusing story of an actor of my acquaintance points out this situation. He had been playing *Peer Gynt* to crowded houses for a long run, but "in the sticks". One evening an admirer greeted him with enthusiasm. "You are a wonderful actor, Mr. B. Why don't you go on the stage?"

I have left until the last what is probably the most important aspect of the theatre in Russia today. That is the work in their children's theatres. Early in the revolution the children's cultural needs were recognized by the leaders, among them Natalie Satz, who organized with funds from the State the unique Moscow Theatre for Children. There are now three such theatres in Moscow and 87 in the U. S. S. R.

In these theatres plays are presented for children by experienced adult actors. The plays are written or adapted for child audiences with a beautiful intuitive grasp of the child's point of view. The Moscow Theatre for Children presented for the Festival *The Negro Boy and the Monkey*. It is a pantomime with dances, songs, animated cartoons and a story teller. It also could be classed as a propaganda play as it had a distinct educational bias.

The little Negro boy is the hero—no race hatreds. He wins the affection of the monkey because he is kind to her—be kind to animals. When the good Soviet captain takes him to Russia after the white hunters capture the monkey, he finds himself work in a chocolate factory—children do not work in factories in Russia but adults work, and how delightful to work in a chocolate factory! The Negro boy finds his friends there among the "Young Pioneers", and there he learns to sing their songs and dance their dances—so also do the

children in the audience. One day the little Negro boy is taken to the circus by his friends and there finds his lost monkey. He flies back to Africa in an airplane. He has promised to organize a detachment of "Young Pioneers" in Africa. In the last act he is back home with his monkey and he tells the little African children about Soviet Russia.

The play is utterly, completely child-like and captivates by its imaginative charm the affections of adults as well as children. What seemed to me most amazing, however, in its understanding of the child's psychological needs was the opportunity given the young audience to dance, sing, tell stories or play games under adult supervision during the intermission. Every child is stimulated by the theatre to do something on his own. He, too, wants to play-act. In this theatre that chance is his. He finds a group and there to his heart's content—and I mean literally that—dances, sings, tells his story, does what he'd like to do about what he has seen.

Tom Sawyer is a great favorite of this theatre, and next year they are presenting *Little Ol' Boy*, Albert Bein's vital drama about an American reform school. Natalie Satz says of her theatre that "only plays that have been pronounced really artistic by genuine adult connoisseurs are fit to be shown to children. Children are so pathetically certain that what they see is absolutely perfect that we have no right to deceive them. We all know how strong and lasting are impressions received in childhood; we know besides that education is easier than re-education and that a child's taste in artistic matters can be utterly spoilt for the rest of his life." It is sadly true that when an adult blandly announces that he is bored by the classics, he is merely telling the world that his education has been faulty; that in his childhood someone failed him.

The theatres of the Soviet Union are real theatres. The Festival of necessity could give us what was only a glimpse, a tantalizing taste of the great richness of theatre experience there, but we left knowing that to its abundant heritage from the past Russia has added a new vitality and power born of its larger social consciousness.



THE ESSENTIAL LIE OF CHRISTIANITY

BY ROBERT BRIFFAULT

WITH that clarity of judgment which comes of facing facts from the point of view of social situations, the communists hold that no effective reform is compatible with any form of religion, whether institutional or personal. The first and indispensable condition for creating a social organization out of the state of antisocial anarchy which obtains in most communities, is, they hold, the elimination of the religious factor and the religious point of view.

That attitude of the communists is to many people the most shocking of their doctrines, and constitutes the main ground for the detestation in which those doctrines are held among Christians. On the other hand, there are numerous persons, more particularly in England and in America, who, while they hold no brief for the religious institutions of the Chris-

tians, fail in various degrees to apprehend the grounds of the communist attitude toward religion. They may consider that it is unnecessarily intolerant and that the matter is not as important as the communists appear to believe. Or they may more or less clearly recognize that institutional Christian bodies, Churches, theocracies, have been the consistent supporters and promoters of those social abominations, the capitalistic system among others, against which communist efforts are directed. This, they will freely admit, has been particularly the case in Russia, where the Orthodox Church was a mere instrument of Czardom. They may not perceive as clearly that the various unestablished Churches in America are as definitely the instruments of the dictatorship of Big Business. But, whatever their views as to the part played by

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religious bodies and institutions, they are in the habit of considering that such an influence is contingent upon particular factors in the social situation of those institutions, or that they are, in other words, accidental corruptions due to human imperfection, and have essentially nothing to do with the religious spirit. There is, they consider, no radical incompatibility between social justice or communism and that religious spirit. Many hold that, on the contrary, a just social organization particularly accords with what they regard as "the essential truth of Christianity", and indeed postulates what they imply by that phrase.

Such an attitude, not uncommon among liberal thinkers, who are otherwise in close sympathy with communism, illustrates the very point which the communists stress; for that attitude constitutes a fatal and unsurmountable obstacle to communism. What they term "the essential truth of Christianity" is in direct opposition to the essential truth of communism, and is radically incompatible with it. That incompatibility has nothing to do with the institutional religions and their social allegiance. It lies in the very essence of what is regarded as the spirit of Christianity, understood in the most favorable acceptance.

What is meant to be understood by "the essential truth of Christianity" is, even without more precise definition, generally intelligible. The spirit, apart from the letter, of Christianity, is conceived as a spirit of general goodwill and benevolence, of charity towards fellow-men and their faults, of forgiveness and loving-kindness and human brotherhood. So far the spirit of Christianity, thus conceived, would appear to be in entire harmony with a social spirit of cooperation, and opposed to the spirit of individualism characteristic of social anarchy. It is such a view of it which constitutes the ground for the belief of those who consider that, far from being incompatible with communism, the essential truth of Christianity is in close harmony with it. Christianity has in fact been constantly represented as an essentially socialistic system, and the legendary prophet of Christianity has commonly been regarded as having been what would nowadays be termed a socialist or communist revolutionary.

In the plausibility of that impression lies the insidious menace of religion to society. To perceive clearly its falsehood requires some familiarity with the social approach to traditional ideas. The function of moral values, and their historical development must be apprehended. What are termed moral values, namely, what motives or forms of behavior are good and which are bad, or evil, have reference entirely to their social effects. There are no absolute good or bad values. The behavior of an individual is good in so far as it promotes the welfare of the social whole of which he is a part; it is bad if it is prejudicial to that extra-individual social interest. Murder is clearly an antisocial act. Circumstances are, however, possible in which murder might be a highly beneficial social act—as, for instance, the murder of a murderer, which should put a stop to further murders. If in America today some fifty persons were murdered and robbed, the lives of some twelve million persons whom they are murdering and robbing would be saved. The moral value of the behavior is thus not absolute, but relative to its social effects.

Whence and how did the Christian view of moral values arise? It is indispensable to have a clear notion of the answer to that question in order to be able to view those values, not as absolute data, but in their perspective with relation to the general development of the notion of moral values.

Like all the ideas upon which Western or European culture

is founded, the analysis of moral values stems from Greek thought. It first differentiated the Western or European mind from the Oriental mind which had dominated all previously existing civilizations of the Near East. Whereas the latter cultures rested upon the authoritarian basis of ideas directly derived from primitive irrational superstition, the Greek mind rejected those authoritarian and absolute values, and regarded all questions from the point of view of rational analysis. In contrast with previous authoritarian and mystical conceptions of moral obligations, Greek thought, as represented by the Ionian schools and by their later exponent Epicurus, clearly perceived and formulated the fact that what are called moral values are social values, that is to say, that morality places the good of the social whole above the good of the individual. It further made clear the fact that the notion of morality, or social good, arises chiefly, and derives its importance from the prevalence of antisocial behavior, or, as it is called, injustice. Moral good thus consists chiefly in abstaining from, in putting down, and resisting injustice or social evil. It may also, of course, be concerned with bringing about social good. But, from the very nature of social facts, the negative aspect of morals, the prevention of antisocial behavior has a much greater importance than any positive aspect. As Epicurus put it very clearly, there would be no notion of justice or social good if there existed no injustice or antisocial evil. Moral good consists then, in that view, in putting down antisocial evil.

One cannot but marvel at the immediate results which followed the emancipation of the Greek, or European, mind from Oriental theocratic ideology. The views of the Ionian thinkers and of Epicurus on the subject of moral good are, in fact, identical with those of Karl Marx and of the clearest modern thinkers. Ethics or morality is not a peculiar set of values, as such, but is a function of social relations, and it resolves itself in resistance to the evils which are the outcome from antisocial behavior, that is, from class power and the like abuses of power.

That clear view of the nature of moral good which was at once reached in the first ages of Greece, suffered, like all Greek culture, a rapid corruption and decay, which was chiefly due to the inroads of Oriental thought, mysticism, religion, into the Western thought which had arisen by liberating itself from those products of theocratic society. That corruption became most conspicuous in the age of Plato, and gained an enormous impulse through his influence. Plato, himself, after starting as a fairly faithful rationalist and an opponent of Oriental mysticism, became "converted" to Orphic religion. After him, his doctrines became rapidly corrupted in the direction of greater and greater mysticism, into Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, and the multitude of theosophical sects of "cranks" out of which ultimately arose Christianity.

The conception of moral good became, with Plato, completely reversed. Instead of consisting in the dominance of social over individual interests, moral good came, on the contrary, to be regarded as an individual and personal matter, a quality of a person's character. Instead of the ideal being, as it was with the early Greek thinkers, the just man, it came to be the wise man and the good man. Instead of being concerned with social good, it became exclusively concerned with individual good. Its aim was individual salvation. The wise man was wise in saving his own soul, in protecting himself against the evils of society. His salvation lay in leading a good life. Philosophy, in the sense which it acquired, was concerned

chiefly with a "Way of Life", that is to say, in the leading of such a good life as would bring satisfaction to the individual soul, comfort it, and protect it from the sufferings to which it was exposed in an antisocial world. The wise man was not supposed to interfere with an antisocial world, to combat or resist antisocial evil, but by patience, gentleness, and tolerance, to render himself, for his own good and benefit, immune from the evils of the antisocial world which plagued other people.

The theosophical sects deriving from Plato's philosophy, were known as philosophers, in the sense which the word still retains in popular language, namely, as connoting persons fortified with patience and tolerance toward evil. The numerous sects which arose, especially in Egypt and Palestine, and led a monastic life of asceticism, contemplation, and good works, were at first referred to as philosophers. Later they became known as Christians.

It would take too long to show here that the common notion that the Way of Life, and the moral and theosophic ideas, of those sects, which swarmed in the Near East during the two centuries before the Christian era, were first set forth by a Jewish prophet is entirely erroneous. The notion that such a prophet was an actual historical personage is a relatively late one, and was unknown, for instance, to Paul of Tarsus, who was only acquainted with the theosophical notion of the Divine Messiah, or Christ, a notion which was in his time at least three thousand years old. The modern notion of a man, called Jesus, that is to say, The Saviour, hailing from a place called Nazareth, which is quite unknown to Palestinian geography, and is never mentioned in the Gospels—the expression translated as "Jesus of Nazareth", being in reality "Jesus the Nazarene", that being a very old name of a Jewish sect of "Saints", and the name by which "philosophers" or anchorites were generally known—that notion is not only entirely devoid of any historical ground, but can be positively shown to be wholly inconsistent with the facts of history. What is termed "the spirit of Christianity", the attitude reflected in the "Logia" of Palestinian "philosophers", commonly referred to as "the Sermon on the Mount", does not represent the inspiration of any individual philosopher, but the fruit of the corruption and degeneration which took place in Greek thought, more particularly since the time of Plato. That corruption, which reversed the splendid insight of the first Greek thinkers who had anticipated the realism of modern sociological thought, pervaded the whole Greco-Roman world, whose "morality" became the morality of Stoicism. Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca were *animae naturaliter Christianae*. It blended with the natural vagaries of the deranged minds of Levantine theosophists and monarchists in Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor, more particularly among Hellenistic Jewish communities of religious "detraqués", becoming combined with the trismegistic gnosticism of decadent Egypt and the Messianic doctrines rampant among the dispersed and frustrated Jews.

Christianity was the negation and inversion of the original Greek social morality. Its culminating expression was the principle placed in the mouth of the Messiah: "Resist not evil"—the most immoral principle ever formulated in any language.

The whole of that attitude rested upon the interpretation of social facts in the most directly false and untrue manner, inverting those facts as the geocentric theory of the cosmos inverted astronomical facts. Instead of the human individual being a member and a product of society, it regarded society as a collection of individuals, self-determined, self-sufficient—

individual "souls" owing nothing of their elements to society. The object of Christian morality is to save individual souls at the expense of society. It is a doctrine of individualism, profoundly antisocial in its basic conceptions. Hence the sole means which Christianity can suggest to amend society is to make the individual "good". Completely ignoring sociological facts, Christianity sets aside the circumstance that the individual cannot be "good" so long as the society of which he is merely a locus is evil, and that the only means of making him "good" is to make society "good". But the sole good which Christianity has in view is the good of the individual. The necessary consequence of its psychological and sociological ignorance is immorality. "Morality", that is, a social attitude, social motives and social behavior, cannot, of course, be built upon a negation of society and an ignorance which inverts its basic facts. Christianity, resting as it does upon the negation of society, and the mythical exaltation of the individual, is necessarily a doctrine of individualism, that is, an antisocial doctrine, or in ethical terms, the most immoral doctrine ever formulated.

That essential and basic immorality of Christianity cannot be amended or tempered by any sort of adaptation or modification, because it constitutes the very core and kernel of Christianity, "the spirit of Christianity". Christianity is a doctrine adapted to an individualistic world, a world without social aims, a world that is not socially organized, but is, on the contrary, founded upon antisocial individualistic anarchy. By no manner of adaptation or amendment can it be applied to an organized society; by no means can an essentially immoral doctrine be converted into a moral doctrine. Christianity is the negation of social morality.

The current sophistry, so extensively exploited, that although Christian institutions have invariably been the bulwarks of oppression and reaction, and the main support of absolutism, feudalism and capitalistic exploitation, the fact has no bearing upon the "spirit of Christianity" is a falsehood. The reactionary character of Christianity is the direct consequence of its antisocial, immoral character.

The Marxian formula that religion is "the opium of the people", serving the tyrannically useful purpose of teaching them resignation, submission, non resistance, and thus effectively protecting oppression, is far too lenient a view of Christianity. The antisocial and immoral Christian morality is far more poisonous than opium. Its antisocial character is inconsistent with, and radically opposed to, any social morality or justice. Justice, the term by which early Greek thought denoted social morality, is not a mere moral value, or if it be susceptible of being viewed as a moral value, that is because it expresses social facts. Justice, in the view of Greek rationalism, signified the abolition of social evil, that is, the abolition of social disorganization, or in other words, the rational and effective organization of society in such a manner as to be a structure capable of functioning and of surviving. The "moral virtue" was thus identical with the salvation, not of the individual, but of society itself. Capitalistic society today is perishing because it is so constituted that its functioning and survival are impossible. That misconstruction, malformation, and impossibility of practical operation and survival, may be termed in intellectual terms stupidity, and in moral terms injustice. But the injustice, the stupidity, the misconstruction and impossibility of functioning are one and the same thing. The moral term is merely a translation into ethical language of the practical social fact.

Christianity is totally indifferent to justice. That virtue is

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not part of the "spirit of Christianity", of the "essential truth of Christianity". That spirit and that truth are concerned with personal salvation, with adapting the individual soul as best possible to a world of injustice. Not with combating it. On the contrary, that spirit and that truth are concerned not to resist evil. To be concerned with justice is un-Christian. And no wonder, since the mental corruption and disintegration termed Christianity consist precisely in the reversal of the social morality which Greek thought, anticipating Marx and sane modern sociological thought, proclaimed when it threw off the insanity of Oriental theocratic mysticism.

Christianity and any form of ideology deriving, as does Christianity, from Oriental theocratic mysticism, is as radically incompatible with, and opposed to, social organization and the mental sanity which it postulates as the social monstrosity of ancient Oriental theocratic empires is opposed to such rational organization. The essential spirit of those ideologies is not merely a prejudicial opium, but is the negation of all social ideology.

I have merely referred to what is conveniently termed the "essential spirit" of Christianity, leaving out of count all the monstrous mental deformities and primitive deliria of superstition which are inseparable from it. These are the inevitable consequence of the radical incapacitation of the human mind, when fundamental social facts themselves, from which all perceptions of the human mind are derived, are completely inverted.

Therefore is it that the first requisite for any form of rational social organization, the indispensable preliminary step to the possibility of communism, is, as Russian Marxians have so lucidly perceived, the complete abolition of Christianity in every form, and of all religions which are founded upon primitive ignorance and the negation of sociological facts. The two things, the spirit of Christianity or of any religion, and rational social organization are incompatible opposites.

BOOKS

THE TEMERITY OF WELLS

BY LEWIS MILLER

THIS is a fine tid-bit of economic learning dashed off between tea and dinner*. However, it is another book to add to an imposing list of titles, and undoubtedly paid the fare back to England.

This book makes you think—you can't help but wonder how Wells has the temerity to write so glibly of things he knows nothing about. And it is exactly this quality about Wells' writing—the combination of ponderous generalities and pompous vacuities—which makes me slightly uncomfortable when I am about to quarrel with him. I never know when he will trip lightly from economics to mysticism.

New America is a case in point. For two chapters he makes

*THE NEW AMERICA—THE NEW WORLD, by H. G. Wells. (Macmillan) \$1

MARXISM VS. LIBERALISM, An Interview between H. G. Wells and Joseph Stalin. (International Pub.) 2¢

a number of statements which I would vigorously dispute (those that I understood). Then suddenly, at the beginning of the third chapter, he says: "In the two preceding chapters I have tried to view the American spectacle from the broad biological standpoint, an ecological standpoint". There you are. I know nothing about the biology of America, let alone the "ecological standpoint". I'm left empty-handed just when I thought I had a fine hold that was good for a fall.

Mind you now, up to the point where we went into American "ecology" I had bided my time and worked over the ground carefully. The statements I was to dispute were well chosen. For instance, Mr. Wells pulled such boners as the following: ". . . All these three systems, Italian, Russian, German, have this in common: they have passed through strictly analogous phases, a violent assumption of a new system after a phase of distress and disintegration, and a real hysterical rigor after that first revolutionary convulsion." A fine opportunity. With austere and slightly condescending demeanor I would say: "Mr. Wells, you're talking through your hat." A neophyte (though not an "ecological" one) in world affairs would know better than to compare Russia to Italy and Germany. Secondly, that blithe illusion of liberals that Fascism is a "revolution" or "a violent assumption of a new system" has been utterly dispelled. Sensible people understand that Fascism is capitalist rule in its most violent and degraded form. No new system has been established—power has been transferred from the gloved hand to the mailed fist, and both hands belong to the capitalist system. Mr. Wells being speechless (perhaps for the first time in his life) after these introductory remarks, I would then go about quoting in detail from Strachey, Dutt, etc.

However, as I have noted above, my chances were wrecked at the beginning of Chapter III. Stunned and bewildered I wandered through the rest of the book. Many an opportunity went by almost unnoticed. Glancing back over the pages a few of them come to my attention—gems of economic wisdom. "Two main aspects of human perplexities . . . surplus energy, and the question of money." Both of these, decidedly subsidiary factors in an analysis of the nature of capitalism, are the foundation of Wells' study of American economic scene. Matters become very involved. It seems that surplus energy (unemployed) and leisure time lead to war . . . "The chief release for surplus energy in the past has been war". Further, that "war has been a sign of plethora through the ages . . . It has kept the balance and prevented overpopulation and degenerative crowding. It is an excretion of surplus energy, and it remains a necessary channel of excretion until some other outlet can be found for the accumulating energy."

The arguments presented in this book boil down as follows:

1. Present day society creates surplus energy (unemployed).
 2. War until now has been an outlet for surplus energy.
 3. Capitalism is the most desirable type of society.
 4. Capitalists should find some outlet for surplus energy.
 5. If no outlet for surplus energy is found by the capitalists wars will break out.
- P. S. Capitalists, of course, will be in no way responsible for the wars.

Surely I didn't let all that go by without taking up the cudgels. Unfortunately, yes. For I was about to devastate Mr. Wells when, at the very end of the book the argument is yanked from the field of reality to the realm of promise. Mr. Wells enters a plea for time. Give capitalism a few more

years (at least in England and in America). For "during these years the vague, exciting promise of a New Deal for mankind which has been dangled before our people, may be converted into a clear, firm intention, planning definitely, experimenting boldly, explaining lucidly, to evolve that new phase in human affairs, that fuller life which is manifestly so possible and so tantalizingly not yet in our grasp."

So there I was . . . tantalizingly left at the end of the book.

* * * * *

In contrast with this book, the interview between Wells and Stalin is a most concise exposition of the bankruptcy of liberalism and the vigor of revolutionary thought. You can save yourself the trouble of reading Wells' pusillanimous meanderings on economics. They are worthless and an insult to an intelligent person. The 2¢ you spend on the International Publishers' pamphlet will not only give you a complete picture of the hopeless foundering of Wells but also a remarkably good statement, in brief, of the Marxian analysis of capitalism.

LESS GAUDY REPORTING

ASYLUM, by William Seabrook. (Harcourt, Brace & Co.) \$2

(Reviewed by John Woodburn)

THIS book is because William Seabrook drank too much and went voluntarily to a famous private sanitarium to be cured. In the opinion of this reviewer, not always charitable, some of Mr. Seabrook's previous books have been because he wrote too much, and didn't do anything about it. Here, however, in this journal of self-exploitation, there is less of the gaudy reporting, the look-mama-Willie-is-playing-cannibal exhibitionism which marred the others and detracted from their honesty and poise. Seabrook is at worst a good reporter, and the detail of the group life, the routine, the atmosphere of one of the best of our mental hospitals is exhaustive and lively, while the author's lessening narcissism allows his fellow-patients to stand out in objective, three-dimensional relief.

Asylum is, of course, definitely not of the calibre or poignance of *A Mind That Found Itself*. Mr. Seabrook's burden was psychological rather than psychopathic, and the depths from which he rose were shallow compared to those which engulfed the others. In a sense, for reportorial purposes, his position was an enviable one. His mind, once freed from the nag of craving for alcohol, was alert and lucid, in a condition to note and absorb the details of the lunatic life about him. Able to discover, incidentally, that his bottle-bondage was but an insulation against self-realization, against facing the fact that perhaps, after all, he was no more than a literary lightweight, a competent reporter who had best be content with that, and let literature alone.

Unexpectedly, these pages are but lightly touched with tragedy; the man who bays at the moon in the disturbed ward at midnight may be playing bridge on the sunporch a day later, and Seabrook manages somehow to make it all rather amusing. In fact, the general aura of the book is that of optimism and humor, even hilarity. For this reason many who read it will be soothed and heartened, will revise their horror of such homes. This reaction is an excellent thing, and badly needed, but it should be realized that the institution of which Mr. Seabrook writes is, unfortunately, the exception rather than the rule. These people he describes are, to turn a brutal

phrase, glacé nuts, privileged people, whose exceptional therapy demands a checkbook at the door. Asylum does very well within its scope, but it might well have beside it on the shelf another volume, and this one would not be enthusiastic or heartening. It would be called *State Hospital*.

INSIDE STORY OF SPYING

SECRETS OF THE WHITE LADY, by Captain Henry Landau. (G. P. Putnam's Sons) \$3

(Reviewed by Leslie T. White)

THIS is the inside story of spying, and best of all, by a man who knows. Captain Henry Landau has that rare combination—knowledge of his subject and the ability to imprison it between the covers of a book. There is no "ghosting" here. It is both a handbook on the methods of spies and a fascinating story that will hold your interest from beginning to end.

The White Lady was the romantic name given to a secret service organization founded by loyal Belgians for the purpose of sending information to the Allies during the World War. Through a series of misadventures, these patriots found they could do the most good by dealing with the British War Office Service of which Captain Landau was in charge. Men, women and children took part, and in some cases faced the Prussian firing squads. Yet Landau gives it to you quietly, dramatically and without hysterics; he is ever the spy-master.

Here you have war striking, not soldiers, but the people back of the lines. How those people think, feel and act, Landau portrays. Nor does he spoil his book by a lot of vicious anti-German propaganda; he gives you the truth dispassionately. He shows something of the problem the invaders encountered in trying to subdue a patriotic people; how they succeeded in spots and failed in others. Failure to read this book is to skip one of the most dramatic episodes in modern history.

A BIOLOGIST VIEWS SOCIETY

FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY, by Edwin Grant Conklin. (Houghton Mifflin Co.) \$1

(Reviewed by William Stuart)

FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY quite accurately reflects the conflicts and the vagueness of the average American scholastic. American scholastics hate war and think that you can end it by platitudes against the "munition makers". American scholastics, despite some remorse caused by suffering and starvation in our present chaos, hate socialism so much, in the end they come to the support of financial capitalism. American scholastics, in an effort to confuse present world issues, prate that "fascism and nazism are nothing but the bastard sons of communism".

Edwin Grant Conklin, a biologist from Princeton University, rather typifies present day scholasticism. His most recent book, *Freedom and Responsibility*, a reprint of a lecture given at Milton Academy, expresses the utopian urge that education, coupled with "Christian brotherhood", will alleviate all of our problems. That is the kernel of a book made boring by the inclusion of unneeded material and the repetition of a good deal of it.

The sale of this book will probably be limited to the previously mentioned scholastics.

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CORRESPONDENCE

NOT SO SIMPLE, MR. FRENCH

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

Mr. Du Freyne French pleads to be shown why his attack on the united front at this time is "wrong", asks for him and his friends to be shown up as "muddleheaded nitwits". It isn't as simple as that. Mr. French is merely being utterly unrealistic, and almost frivolous at a time of the greatest danger to us, our children and all humanity.

A united front of all opponents of capitalism, which breeds tyranny, war and violence is important to conquer an immediate, threatening and powerful enemy. You don't, while a dragon is stalking the land breathing fire on your crops, stop to discuss what vegetables you will cook when the crops have been saved; you first kill the dragon, for the very simple reason that otherwise he will kill you. There is no other and no simpler reason than this for the present tremendous need for a united front of all opponents of Fascism.

If in the past there were pretenses and deceit, those were errors. Mr. French surely wouldn't forever deny the correctness of the tactic of unity to fight a foe because at some time or other he didn't like the way some of the people in that front behaved?

It is so obvious to say that the American revolution will (or must) grow out of the soil of American conditions. Of course it must, and will, and is so growing. Would Mr. French suggest that hunger marches, the waterfront struggle of A. D. 1934-5 on the West Coast, the amazing struggles of Negro sharecroppers to form unions, are motivated by Bulgarian, Persian or Russian conditions? He is merely taking out of whole cloth one of the stupid and ignorant charges made by anti-revolutionists. Marx lived in 1848, that argument runs, and so how can you analyze capitalism or enthuse workers or organize the class-struggle in U. S. A. in 1935? Galileo said the world was round much earlier than Marx said capitalism must be conquered by the proletariat, and the world remains round today.

We don't like Mr. French's remark "through honest work and study". Is the work of all communists, epics, revolutionaries who don't belong to Mr. French's particular little band in San Diego, dishonest and lazy?

Then he asks you, Mr. Editor, why in heaven's name Epics should remain Epics and Communists Communists and Utopians Utopians. Well, there are many answers to this one, ranging from the old human nature bromide, through Anatol France's dictum that the trouble is, men are sincere, down to the latest and least answerable: Alas, the world is divided into people who think they are right. It isn't so important now to be "right" or "wrong" in ultimates: it is inexpressibly important to fight a common enemy in common, and not to undermine, sabotage, ridicule, or attack in any other way the efforts of those working tirelessly toward that end.

Berkeley, California.

Richard Barker

HELP THE CR STRIKERS

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

All of us have heard the statement that it is not news if a dog bites a man, but that it is news if a man bites a dog. Today reports of employers' abuse of the rights of the laboring class are in a sense no longer news, for they do not come

to us as a thunderbolt from a clear sky. We are accustomed to them. But it is news to learn that those in charge of Consumers' Research are using all the devices of the industrialist against the employes of CR who are now on strike. It is news because such facts run directly counter to what one might expect from F. J. Schlink and J. B. Matthews, if one is to judge from their verbal and written denunciations of the use of such tactics by other employers.

For the past two years there has been a feeling of increasing dissatisfaction and of increasing insecurity developing within the minds of those few employes of CR who have been fortunate enough to retain their positions. Mr. Schlink, the president, has dismissed people from CR with no regard to competency and with all regard to whim and fancy with the result that there has been a tremendous labor turnover within the organization. Finally, on last August 1, the employes formed an A. F. of L. local to bargain with Mr. Schlink. Within a very few hours after the union had presented its demands, the president of the union and two other members were dismissed from CR. Later D. H. Palmer, treasurer of CR and a member of the board of directors, was removed from the board when he refused to sign a statement charging the union with blackmail. This leaves Mr. Schlink and Mr. Matthews in control of the board. They consistently refused to negotiate with the union and so, on September 4, the union called a strike, which was supported almost unanimously by the workers, who number about seventy.

The strike is still going on despite the tactics of Schlink, who secured an injunction against picketing, has employed armed guards to threaten the pickets, has called the strikers Communists, and so on through the gamut of customary devices. The strikers who are presenting their cause to the subscribers of CR have met with encouraging response from those whom they have contacted. They are not interested in wrecking CR, but merely in securing adequate protection against the tyrannical labor policy of Mr. Schlink.

Undoubtedly there are subscribers to CR among the readers of Pacific Weekly. The purpose of this short letter is to acquaint you with the situation at CR and to ask you to aid the cause of the strikers by sending protests to Mr. Schlink and by sending your name and address to the Technical, Editorial, and Office Assistants Union, A. F. of L., No. 20055, P. O. Box 144, Washington, New Jersey, so that they may send you more detailed information about the strike. Since they do not have access to the files of CR they have no list of the subscribers, and it is to them that the workers wish to appeal.

Washington, N. J.

Arthur Dean

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

ROBERT BRIFFAULT has made a greater contribution to anthropological and sociological thought than any other living writer. He is the author of a number of books—*Psyche's Lamp*, *Rational Evolution*, *Breakdown*, and others.

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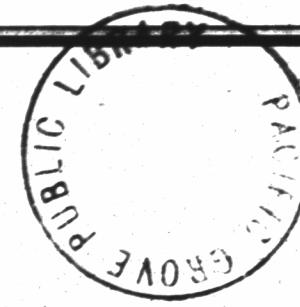
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